

The Messenger

United Methodist Church – 2210 Sixth Avenue East, Alexandria, MN 56308

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January 2011

Editor: Colleen Schutte

Dear Friends,

So, how was Christmas for you? (Acknowledging that it's actually Christmas now, since December 24th, running until January 6th when Epiphany begins. All of that getting-ready-for-Christmas time in December was actually Advent!) Good? Not so great? Lots better than you expected it to be? A mixture of all of the preceding, plus?

When you analyze the holiday just concluded, how it affected you, how it left you feeling, how you will classify it for future reference, you may realize that you were, in part, responsible for it. But, a good part of Christmas, like life itself, just comes to you, as a given, a gift even, granted, often with others' fingerprints on it! So, how much do you suppose, out of the whole thing, that portion amounts to? What percentage of your life, including its memorable events, simply arrives on your doorstep? It could be a fascinating analysis to do, though not one I'd care to undertake. Perhaps it will be the subject of a study and dissertation for some doctoral student someday, if it hasn't already been done. It leads me to an interesting little story.

In one of the churches I have served, there was man named George, married to a woman named Alice. They lived out in the country, made their living farming. They did quite well. After a number of years on the farm, George, with his array of talents and interests, connections and resources, decided, or was persuaded, to run for the state legislature – and won! When he ran for re-election he won again, and again, and again. As it turned out, the seat was his, essentially for the rest of his life. He became well-known and well-respected, with friends all across the political spectrum.

When George died, his funeral was a big event, attended by all sorts of “important” people – names you would recognize. A few years later Alice died. Her send-off was smaller, but still impressive. Then, came the truly big event – the settlement of the estate.

Money and property were parceled out in some very interesting ways, some that were expected, but others that caused a stir. It seemed that George and Alice, always creative and thoughtful and productive, had had some fun figuring out with whom they would share their accumulated worldly goods. And one recipient in particular that cranked up the conversation: the state of Minnesota!

Alice and George, in deep gratitude to this wonderful state for all the gifts and opportunities it afforded them – educationally, vocationally, socially, environmentally, governmentally, et cetera – ***gave back*** to the state government, in addition to any remaining taxes owed, one-fifth of their estate! (Don't quote me on that number. I don't remember the exact portion; but it was substantial!) And as we sometimes say in these parts, well that's different! Indeed!

No one had ever heard of anyone ever doing such a thing, ever!

Now you have. And I invite you to consider how much of your life (including your recent holiday and the year just ending) was and is really gift...given...grace. And in the spirit of the holiday season still in session – know that it is not too late, nor too early to grace others!

Shalom,
Jeff

Thank you all for the ways you have graced us through 2010 and at this Christmas time. We wish you all a blessed Christmas, Epiphany, and New Year!

Julie, Jeff, Noah, Trystan

Parish News

Hospitalized Recently . . .

Bonnie Anderson – DCH – now home
Jennifer Dirkes – DCH – now home
Dan Olson – DCH – now home
Dar Rushford – DCH – now home
Barb Stefanski – DCH – now home
Vern Steffen – DCH – now home
Roger Thompson – St. Cloud – now home
Ted Zabrosky – now home

Congratulations to:

Adam Zins and Elizabeth Zins-Flenner on the birth of their son, Hunter Michael, on Dec. 6th; and to Grandmother, RosAnn Flenner.

Baptized

KoleBert Ray Feda, son of LynAnn Feda, was baptized on December 12, 2010. He was born on July 16, 2010. KoleBert's sponsors are Mie Pierce, Desy Norgren and Roman Hansen

Colten Alan Ferris, son of Ken and Shelly Ferris was baptized on December 19, 2010. He was born on August 12, 2010. Colten's sponsors are Dirk and Tonia Hagedon.

Happy Birthday To:

Betty Jene Heieie, who will celebrate her 85th birthday on January 9th.

Our Sympathy To:

Roy and Connie Good on the death of Connie's mother on December 10th.

Marion Laurvick and family on the death of her husband, Dick. His service will be on Wed., 12/29, 11:00 at Anderson Funeral Home

New Members joining on December 19th:

Michael and Sandra Denke and sons, Brian and Jeremiah, transferred from Calvary Lutheran in Alexandria. They live at 3305 South Broadway, Lot 37, phone 320-762-1564.

Ken and Michelle Ferris, and children Ella and Colten – Shelly transferred from Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Osakis, Ken has joined through Profession of Faith. They live at 504 West Oak Street, Osakis, MN 56360 – phone 320-859-2586.

Nathan and Amanda Pring have joined by Profession of Faith. They live at 403 Lake St., Alexandria. Phone 320-766-9091 (Amanda) and 320-460-0325 (Nathan).

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of Alexandria

Telephone (320) 763-4624

Pastor: Jeffrey Hansen

Parish Worker: Jocelyn Olson

Secretary/Treasurer: Colleen Schutte

Director of Youth & Children's

Ministries: Michelle Ferris

Custodian: Denise Dropik

Organists: Kay Hoffland, Kirk Landman,
Gale Maxwell

Choir Director: Kirk Anderson

Nursery: Amanda Winther & Casey Kingman

Office Hours

Jeff – Tuesday (3-5 pm)

Thursdays (10-12 noon, 3-5 p.m.)

by appointment at other times

Monday through Friday 9:00-1:00

Colleen – Mon-Tue-Wed-Thu-Fri

Jocelyn – Mon-Tue-Wed

Michelle – Tue-Wed-Thu-Fri – 9:00-4:00

Please call ahead if you wish to come in to the office. There are times when we are not in the building, even though we are working. We recommend that you call to see if the person you wish to meet with is in. There also may be times when someone is in the office later than 1:00 p.m.

Publication Date for the next *Messenger*:

is the last week of Jan.
articles submitted for the
February issue need to be in
the office by Thursday
January 20, 2010.



In your prayers, remember LaVonne Ahlstedt, Bonnie Anderson, Luella Beto, Jennifer Dirkes, Lowell Gess, Barb Glanville, Roy and Connie

Good and family, Marilyn Graczyk, Evelyn Hertel, Bob Vikander, Marion Laurvick and family, Bob Mohawk, Dan Olson, Helen Paulson, Dar Rushford, Barb Stefanski, Vern Steffen, Roger Thompson and Ted Zabrosky.

The Northstar District Prayer Connection:

Jan 5 – 11 Eveleth UMC
 Jan 12 – 18 Grace UMC in Fergus Falls
 Jan 19 – 25 Peace UMC in Fergus Falls
 Jan 26 – Feb 1 Fleming UMC

Worship Attendance

	2010		2009	
	8:00	10:30	8:00	10:30
Nov. 28	74	100	67	116
Dec. 5	63	126	71	253
Dec. 12	40	252	78	107
Dec. 19	64	118	77	108
Dec. 26	35	58	28	68

JANUARY VOLUNTEERS

Liturgists:

8:00 Jan. 2 & 9 – Lee Becker Jan. 16, 23, 30 – Tom DeWitt
 10:30 Jan. 2 & 9 – RosAnn Flenner Jan. 16, 23, 30 – Paula Glade

Ushers:

Jan. 2 8:00 – Ken Ryan, Amelia Golde, Zach Thomson
 10:30 – Scott Schlapkohl, Toby Helgeson, Maggie Flenner, Megan Bristow
 Jan. 9 8:00 – Ken Ryan, Emily Merten, Nicholas Schlapkohl
 10:30 – Scott Schlapkohl, Maria Schlapkohl, Jared Nelson, Toby Helgeson
 Jan. 16 8:00 – Ken Ryan, Will Reed, Emily Merten
 10:30 – Scott Schlapkohl, Samantha Winther, Maggie Flenner, Megan Bristow
 Jan. 23 8:00 – Ken Ryan, Amelia Golde, Nicholas Schlapkohl
 10:30 – Scott Schlapkohl, Samantha Winther, Sarah Nelson, Maria Schlapkohl
 Jan. 30 8:00 – Ken Ryan, Will Reed, Zach Thomson
 10:30 – Scott Schlapkohl, Ryan DeReamer, Sarah Nelson, Jared Nelson

Greeters:

January 2 8:00 – Berrnie & Betty Van Zomeren 10:30 – Margaret Anderson
 January 9 8:00 – Don and Pat Baustian 10:30 – Chuck Bollen
 January 16 8:00 – Aaron & Kelly Bumgarner family 10:30 – Greg & Denise Dropik family
 January 23 8:00 – Linda Cole 10:30 – Dennis & Arlyn Cin
 January 30 8:00 – Scott and Vicki Johnston 10:30 – Marge Jensen

Coffee Servers:

Jan. 2 – Brian & Patti Baustian, Mike & Jacque Donahue
 Jan. 9 – Gary & Heidi Becker, Steve & Marsha Haugen
 Jan. 16 – Larry & Linda Mills, Jeff & Jeanne Reed
 Jan. 23 – Yellow Sunday School Group
 Jan. 30 – Marc & Bonnie Anderson, Pete & D'vee Christopherson

Organists:

Jan. 2 – Gale Maxwell
 Jan. 9 – Kay Hoffland
 Jan. 16 – Lonnie Kriel
 Jan. 23 – Gale Maxwell
 Jan 30 – Lonnie Kriel

Thank you for your gifts to Alexandria UMC. Your support in 2010 provided: A free community breakfast the second Saturday of each month, an education wing for youth group and other activities including Sunday school for toddlers to high school students and Vacation Bible School, Adult Fellowship, Bible Studies and group discussions, a neighborhood block party, a mission team to Rosebud Indian Reservation, the Harvest Festival, a narthex for free photos with Santa, a sanctuary for weddings, celebrations of life, and Sunday worship, Hurricane Relief in Haiti, and a wonderful staff to maintain these good works. As we all continue to "Grow and Live in the Spirit of Christ", may you be blessed with God's abundant love throughout the New Year.

Free Tax Services!!

Starting on January 17, 2011
Free Tax Help!!! - Free E-File!!!
Appointments only, so call today!
800-492-4805 or 218-685-4486

Locations:

Alexandria (United Way -2504 Aga Drive)
Elbow Lake – (WCMCA Building)

BE A MENTOR

One hour a week can make a big difference in a young person's future. January 2011 – National Mentor Month – is the perfect time to make a commitment to help a child.

District 206 Mentor Program
Supported by Douglas/Pope United Way

For more information:
762-3310, extension 4274
khaug@alexandria.k12.mn.us



Reminder. . .the monthly calendar is now part of the web page: www.alexumc.org. On the left hand side, click on "calendar"...you will be able to choose which month you wish to view and/or print. We have the whole year on there (as much as we have right now). Be sure to check the calendar frequently as things may be added or changed.



End of year news from the sewing ladies: We enjoy our times together and have begun sewing dresses again – so don't forget - we need your donations. We recently made:

- 10 quilts for Jingle Bells
- 10 quilts for Birth Right
- 10 quilts for Someplace Safe
- 10 quilts for United Way
- 14 UMC baby layettes
- 10 layettes for East Moe World Relief



Interesting things have happened since I last let you peek into my diary. Right around Thanksgiving, two men brought a new bed for me, right into the sanctuary! They really had to work hard to get it in and put up, but Thanks Guys. It was worth it – at least for a little while. It was so great, I could climb up really high and see everything that was going on and if the sermon got too looong, I could take a little nap on the branch. Life was good! Imagine the shock to my system when my bed started to move and I ended up outside in the cold. Let me tell you, I scurried down that trunk and ran through the door just as it was closing and went into hiding. When I finally ventured out and eavesdropped on the conversation of the ladies decorating, I learned that my bed was so dry (the result of being blown over in October) that they could not put lights on a live/dead tree. Christmas is all about lights, so I understand and won't pout. Those nice ladies did save some of the cones and used them to decorate wreathes, so now if I'm lonely, I crawl up and snuggle next to a cone.

The place is never quiet – good thing mice don't hibernate. UMW ladies got together – great program, cookies and ice cream. Then there was a potluck dinner, ummmm good! Meeting that followed was informative. The next week was filled with children singing, talking, I guess it is called practicing, for their great Christmas program. You folks that no longer have young ones in the program, don't know what you miss by attending the early service, but then you do make more space available for all the visitors and that is great. But the day before the program, I really made things interesting. Santa came to the Community Breakfast. The little ones weren't scared of him – it was me. I just wanted to see them closer so I ran up Santa's arm and hid behind his beard. When I realized what I was doing, I was ashamed and crept back to my bed. I think I will lay low for awhile and ponder this wonderful season of Advent.



We are going to try something different for communion for 2011. In the past we've had volunteers provide bread for communion on the first Sunday of the month. For 2011, we would like to ask people

who are interested to bake bread for communion rather than purchase store bread. We will provide an easy to make recipe for you! If you would be willing to do this for one Sunday, please contact Jocelyn at the church office (320-763-4624) or email her at: jocelyn@alexumc.org.

60 Years Old & Better Movie Matinees

2nd Wednesday of each month – September through May – 1:00 doors open – 1:30 movie begins (all 9 movie theatres will be open)

\$4 per person – Pop \$1 and Popcorn \$1

Sponsored by Cinema 9 Theatres and District 206 Community Education

For current movies showing:

See the Echo Press

Call 762-8204

Website: midwaycinema9.com

**No Sunday School on
January 2nd
Sunday School resumes
on January 9th**



Alex UMC members interested in exploring and taking an active part in environmental stewardship met on Thursday, December 9th, to discuss the first 5 essays included in the book Love God, Heal Earth. As any “book clubber” will tell you, the book often serves as a catalyst for further discussion. This was no exception! Participants hope to engage UMC members and the greater community in activities and events that support “green” practices and environmental stewardship.

DID YOU KNOW. . . More than 1 million trees’ worth of bulk mail arrives in American mailboxes each year. About 6 million tons of catalogs and direct mailings end up in municipal solid waste (that’s enough to fill 470,000 garbage trucks). The production AND disposal of junk mail consumes more energy than 2.8 million cars!

Even one small step...can make a difference. Did you receive a deluge of offers and catalogs in the mail this Christmas season? Did you know that there is a web site you can go to that will allow you to opt out of receiving those newsletters, catalogs, and credit card/insurance offers? You can reduce the amount of junk mail you receive by registering at <https://www.dmachoice.org> (The registration online is free.) This site allows you to select specific mailings to opt out of. . .or you can opt out of all. It will NOT restrict you from getting mail from companies that you use or have a subscription to. I found the web site easy to use and it even keeps a record of those companies/mailings that you have asked to opt out of. We hope you’ll check it out!



Breakfast with Santa proved to be a happily anticipated event enjoyed by many. We served 152 breakfasts, and more than 50 children had their picture taken with Santa. Thank you Alex UMC! What exactly did we do?

♥ Created and tied invitation tags to hundreds of candy canes and personally delivered them at the United Way food drop

- ♥ Filled beautiful gift bags and provided the filling
- ♥ Decorated Santa’s photo area
- ♥ Photographed and printed photos with Santa
- ♥ Cooked, served and cleaned up at breakfast (and donated breakfast items)
- ♥ Built a beautiful narthex to hold such an event
- ♥ Opened the church doors, turned on the lights, and said, “Welcome!”
- ♥ Acted with grace and kindness and love in doing all the “little” things that needed to be done

Who did those things? - Alex UMC - Margaret Anderson - Pat Baustian - Jean Bristow - Shirley Bruckner - Gary Carlson and Arlene Janes-Carlson - Kay Dalthorp - Paula, Duff and Abby DeReamer - Linda DeWitt - Judy Florell - Brenda Golde - Julie and Jeff Hansen - Sue Helgeson - Betty Jene Heieie - Ann and John Heydt - Marge and Jim Jensen - DeeAnn and Tom Kraemer - Barb Malvin - Linda Mills - Connie Mehesan - Carol Meyer - Lori Mingus - Dave Nelson - Jocelyn Olson - Roger Parks - Donna Phillips - Kathleen and Bruce Pohlig - Carolyn Randall - Jeanne and Jeff Reed - Kathy Reiber - Shawn Reilly and the Reilly 3 - Heidi Ryan - Santa Claus - Scott and Maria Schlapkohl - Colleen and Ron Schutte - Betty Springman - Aaron and Brenda Thomson - Sally Vano - UMW Friends Circle.

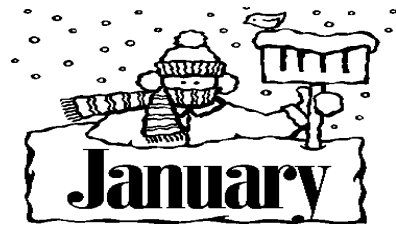
So many gave so much, and if your name is accidentally missing, please know you are appreciated. 😊



All Church Potluck on Sunday, January 2nd, following the 10:30 worship service. Bring a dish to share and join in the fellowship! We encourage you to make a dish from the 2009 church recipe book. Put a note with your dish indicating what page the recipe is on in the cookbook. If your last name begins with A-C, please plan on hosting (set-up, beverage prep and clean up). See you there!!!



If you have an old cell phone, in working condition, you can recycle it here at church. They will be given to Someplace Safe to be used for 911 calls. Please make sure your information has been deleted before you drop them off in the computer library.



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|--|---|--|
| 1 Pat Baustian | 9 Mike Denke
Rachel Erie
Hanna Gadbow
Betty Jene Heieie | 22 Karen McGinn
Kathleen Pohlig |
| 2 Heather Cogger
Marge Jensen
Ron Reiber
Brookelyn Scribner | 11 Deloris Venekamp | 25 Chris Hayes
Paul Westerberg |
| 3 Scott Mogler
Bob Vikander, Sr. | 12 Jessica Nelson | 26 Eleanor Mattocks
Betty Van Zomeren |
| 4 Arlana Langner
Sue Walker | 13 Toby Helgeson | 27 Hailee Runnoe
Lois Sommer
Geri Zabrosky |
| 6 Kelly Decko
Kathy Reiber
Colin Reilly | 14 Jim Bridenstine
Dorothy Menk | 29 Chris Hastings
Judith Bolin
Diane Strehlow |
| 7 Don Ahlstedt
Abigail Evans | 16 Johnna Nelson
Eunice Weedman | 30 Jena Dirkes
Barb Keepers |
| 8 Bob Kriel | 17 Will Heydt
Deb Mercier | 31 Lois Burkart
Jennifer Cavers
Jeremiah Denke
Ashley Scribner
Jeremy Scribner |
| | 18 Brenda Thomson
Vicki Townsend | |
| | 19 Ben Erie | |
| | 21 Susan Jordan
Hunter Mogler
Shaunah Stanbra
Cheryl VanRoekel
Blair Wassengeso | |

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

Did you know. . .“Statistics show that children of prisoners are six times more likely than other children to be incarcerated at some point in their lives.” (Source: Senate Report 106-404: Depts. of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 2001. September 8, 2000, 56 cited in Jucovy, Amachi, 2.) United Methodist Church Redemption Kids Ministries in Oklahoma is seeking to turn that around. As a ministry already focused on prisoners and ex-prisoners, it was natural for Redemption to reach out to children and families. Many of these children feel alone in their struggles. Meeting children in similar circumstances helps them to cope. “I felt angry. I know I shouldn’t, because it’s not you that locked my parents up,” remembers Equandre Wofford, active in Redemption Kids for more than six years, and now a youth leader helping others succeed. Joy Block, youth director for the Redemption Youth program at Redemption Penn Avenue UMC was incarcerated herself. Block says, “I want our youth to...follow God first. That’s number one.” Your gifts to Human Relations Day provide avenues to restored relationships through ministries like Redemption Kids, a Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program; Community Developers, self-improvement programs; and United Methodist Voluntary Services, community advocacy that challenges oppression and injustice. We will take an offering for Human Relations Day on Sunday, January 16th. Special offering envelopes will be included in the worship folder, or you may mail your contribution to the church office with “Human Relations” noted in the memo section of your check.



Friends Circle – Thursday, January 13, 7:00 pm

Joy Circle – Thursday, January 20, 9:30 am at Traveler’s Inn

Peace Circle – Thursday, January 20, 1:30 pm



There are still Church Cookbooks (\$12) and Helpful Hints Books (\$7) available for sale in the church narthex. They make great gifts!

“Leading Adaptive Change” - Saturday, January 29 - 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Normandale Hylands UMC, 9920 Normandale Blvd., Minneapolis 55437

Cost is \$10 - Led by Gil Rendle - Register at <https://events.minnesotaumc.org>

Gil Rendle is a sought after speaker and consultant especially in the areas of change and leadership. This workshop is for laity and clergy to learn more about how the changes in our culture and mission field are demanding new kinds of leadership. You will become more familiar with the concepts of adaptive change and how the times we are in do not respond to a simple quick fix or trying to do what we have always done better or harder. The new leadership is about becoming a learning community and creating the space for the community to discover a new path forward. This is a critical shift and Gil Rendle is a knowledgeable guide on this journey.